

SEVERE LOCAL STORMS FOR DECEMBER 1948

[The table hereunder contains such data as have been received concerning severe local storms that occurred during the month. A revised list will appear in the United States Meteorological Yearbook]

Place	Date	Time	Width of path, yards	Loss of life	Value of property destroyed	Character of storm	Remarks
Colorado, entire State	4-5					Blowing snow and dust.	Winds, reaching "gale" intensity in north-central portion, resulted in heavy soil movement in drier areas and drifting of snow. Damages comparatively light, considering intensity and scope of storm, and limited to grain fields and buildings. At Fort Collins, roofs of 3 buildings damaged to extent of \$2,000, and about \$500 damage to roofs and windows. Six baggage cars of Colorado and Southern passenger train blown off track 28 miles north of Fort Collins.
Minnesota, extreme southwest.	4-5			2	\$25,000	Ice, sleet, snow, and wind.	Many poles and wires down; communication and electric services disrupted from ½ to 48 hours. Traffic seriously delayed. Ice began to form about 1 a. m. of 5th and remained on wires in some localities until 8th. Thickness of ice on wires varied from ¼ to 1 inch in diameter. Heaviest ice formation was in Lyon County. Two persons killed and 2 others seriously injured when tree was blown on automobile. Unusual weight of ice and high winds, resulted in considerable damage to overhead wire-systems, amounting to about \$25,000 loss. About 254 poles down and more than 328 telephone circuits out of service.
Illinois	5	Afternoon				Wind	Many trees blown down, utility services interrupted, and windows broken; airplane damaged in Waukegan; 1 industrial chimney blown down in Rock Island-Moline area. Other areas affected were Freeport, Lincoln, and Springfield.
Eastern and southern Wisconsin.	5	Afternoon and evening.			\$19,200	do.	6 persons injured in the Milwaukee area. Many plate glass windows broken; several electric signs and billboards partially destroyed; utility poles and trees toppled. 3 concrete walls under construction fell; a partially built dwelling collapsed; a barn blown down. There were numerous power failures due to fallen lines, disrupting radio broadcast stations in the Madison area; long distance telephone circuits were disrupted; 500 telephones put out of service in the central and southern portions of the State. In Racine, a small barn was damaged; a small boat on pier blown into the Lake; several plate glass windows broken. At Wrely Airport, near Burlington, a trainer airplane was badly damaged.
Missouri, entire State	5	All day				do.	Unusually strong wind from southwest, resulting in widespread, but mostly minor damage. In St. Louis and vicinity trees and wires blown down or broken, plate glass windows and street lights broken, and cornices and roofs of some buildings damaged; damage several thousand dollars. At Fulton and in Callaway County roofs and cornices damaged, windows broken, barn blown down, a church moved 15 feet off its temporary foundation, wires and tree limbs broken, and haystacks blown down; damage over \$5,000. At municipal airport, Jefferson City, new hangar suffered \$1,000 to \$1,500 damage; some wires and trees damaged. At Martinsburg roofs and trees damaged and haystacks blown down; store roof partly torn off. At Columbia and in Boone County trees, wires, and window glass broken and Christmas street decorations blown down. Barn near Sturgeon demolished, killing 9 calves and several pigs. Boundary lights and storm windows at municipal airport damaged. At Shelby and over greater part of Shelby County about 30 roofs, windows, and porches damaged; a few outbuildings and a windmill blown down; also a few telephone and electric poles. In Camden and Lake of Ozarks area shingles blown from roofs and numerous trees blown down. At Lakeside some damage to trees, roofs, power lines, etc.; loss within 8-mile radius, \$3,000. At Joplin numerous trees damaged and a barn blown down.
Iowa, western and northern portions.	5			2		Snow and ice	Snow, ice, and biting winds slowed traffic; driving hazardous in northern half. Heaviest snow in west, with over 3 inches at Sioux City. 2 persons killed in automobile accidents caused by slippery pavements. Lowest barometer readings of record for any December recorded at Des Moines and Charles City, with readings of 28.97 and 28.85 inches respectively.
Southern Wisconsin	14-15	Afternoon of 14th to early morning of 15th.		3		Sleet and freezing rain.	1 person killed in Milwaukee County, 2 in Hancock, and 1 child badly injured in traffic accidents.
Allegheny and Garrett Counties, Md.	14-15					Ice	Continuous rain froze on wires and trees, creating havoc in mountainous sections. Travel and walking extremely dangerous and communications out entirely in several areas. Telephone and power lines broken by ice.
Pennsylvania	15-16			2		do.	Glaze broke and disrupted utility lines, particularly at Johnston, Somerset, Springs, Harrisburg, and Wellsville. Many tree limbs broken. At Johnston, heavy ice broke trees up to 16 inches thick; also, tower toppled killing 2 repairmen. Property damage in thousands of dollars.
Ohio, central and southern counties.	15-16					Rains	Lowlands flooded, also basements in some residences. Some low places on roads covered with water. Damage apparently minor.
Michigan	16-17	Night				Winds	Considerable damage in many communities. Communications and power services interrupted. Trees blown down, obstructing roads. Great Lakes steamers took shelter behind breakwaters to escape winds. Ferry traffic across Straits and Lake Michigan unable to maintain schedule. An unusual seiche in Great Lakes, with low water at Bay City laying bare city's water intakes that extend into Saginaw Bay.
Ocean and Monmouth Counties, New Jersey.	19					Snow, ice, and winds.	Snow froze on communication lines and trees causing them to break with only moderate wind, especially in Lakewood vicinity. Damage from this source estimated at \$50,000. Damage to roofs, etc., from moderately strong winds on several days probably considerable. Icy roads on several days also caused numerous accidents, resulting in damages.
West Virginia, mountain and northeastern sections. Barnstable County and Martha's Vineyard, Mass.	19 19-20	11 p. m.-4 a. m.			\$250,000	Snow	Almost all traffic stalled on U. S. Routes 11, 50, and 340.
						Snow and gales	Heavy wet snow and rain froze on telegraph, telephone, and power lines and on highway surfaces. In Cape Cod area between Cape Cod Canal and Provincetown, 1,500 telephones out of commission, and electric power disrupted for 12 to 18 hours in numerous towns on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard. Power, light, and telephone poles and wires collapsed.
Albion, Mont.	20				2,500	Wind	Damage to buildings and haystacks.
Cut Bank, Mont.	20					do.	Winds of 70 m. p. h. with gusts of 100 m. p. h. disrupted telephone communications for about 2 hours.

SEVERE LOCAL STORMS FOR DECEMBER 1948—Continued

Place	Date	Time	Width of path, yards	Loss of life	Value of property destroyed	Character of storm	Remarks
Nebraska, western third.....	20	-----	1 200	-----	-----	Dust and wind.....	Winds reached gale force, damaging wheat fields in some localities. Dust so thick that travel halted in vicinity of Oshkosh, Garden County.
Red Boiling Springs, Tenn..	24-25	4 a. m., 24th-7 a. m., 25th.	-----	-----	-----	Ice.....	Sleet, freezing rain, and snow. Some damage to trees and telephone lines.
San Joaquin Valley floor, from Bakersfield south to Grapevine, Calif.	25-26	9 a. m. 25th to 6:30 p. m. 26th.	1 40	-----	1,010,000	Wind and dust.....	Storm moved northwestward; path approximately 50 miles long. Damage to cotton and vegetables approximately \$1,000,000. Most damage east of Highway 99, between Greenfield and Grapevine. Duststorm one of worst in history of Kern County; very few recorded in December. Greatest potential damage will result from mass movement of topsoil and loss of topsoil.
Colorado, eastern plains and extreme southwest.	28	-----	-----	-----	-----	Blowing snow and dust.	Strong winds drifted snow and eroded soil, damaging grain fields and slowing transportation.
Oconomowoc, Wis.....	28	12:45 p. m., C. S. T.	-----	1	-----	Snow and sleet.....	Man killed by passing train during sleet storm.
Kansas, northwestern portion.	28	All day.....	1 60	-----	-----	Blizzard.....	High winds and blowing snow, that totalled 2 to 4 inches blocked highways from western border eastward for about 150 miles. At Goodland, wind velocity reached 67 m. p. h. with gusts of 74 m. p. h. and zero visibility. 79 long-distance telephone circuits out, as result of an inch or more of ice on wires between Colby and Salina. No serious damage to livestock.
Nebraska, from southwest to northeast.	28	-----	1 150	-----	-----	Ice, snow and driving snow.	Considerable glaze in central and northeast. Snow drifts blocked roads, interrupting travel. Some places without electricity for 2 days. Considerable damage to telephone and power wires.
Eastern and central Wisconsin.	28-29	Afternoon of 28th to morning of 29th.	-----	-----	300	Sleet, glaze, and snow.	Highways along Lake Michigan from Milwaukee northward to Sheboygan, and westward to central Wisconsin icy and slippery. Numerous power-line breaks along the Lake shore between Milwaukee and Sheboygan.
Minnesota, extreme southwest.	28-29	P. m. and a. m.	-----	-----	-----	Ice, sleet, snow, and wind.	Some damage to overhead wire systems.
Iowa, northern half.....	28-29	-----	-----	-----	-----	Snow and ice.....	Rain and drizzle, freezing as it fell; highways hazardous. Precipitation turned to snow and accompanied by driving winds gave severe storm conditions, especially in northern 3 tiers of counties when up to 8 inches of new snow fell. Highways temporarily blocked in O'Brien and Sioux Counties and other roads snow packed or ice covered.
Milwaukee, Wis.....	29	Afternoon.....	-----	-----	23,000	Wind, rain and sleet.	3 windows were blown in; 8 people injured due to slippery roads. 1 Piper Cub plane damaged by wind.
Southwestern Vermont, western Massachusetts, and western Connecticut.	29-31	7:45 a. m. 29th-31st.	-----	2	\$11,000,000	Rain.....	Heavy rain of record proportions, falling on frozen ground, caused flood conditions over an area approximately 4,500 square miles; counties of Bennington and Windham, Vt.; Berkshire and western portions of Hampshire and Hampden Counties, Mass.; Litchfield, Fairfield, and western Hartford Counties, Conn. Flood damage especially severe in North Adams, Mass., where 2 deaths from drowning, and 400 families evacuated. All major highways west of Springfield, Mass., cut off at some point by high water. Railroad traffic west of Greenfield, Mass., on the Boston & Maine suspended, as was service on New York Central Lines between Boston, Mass., and Albany, N. Y.
Venice-Sarasota area, Fla.....	30	Afternoon.....	-----	-----	2,500	Wind.....	Squall of local nature, with winds estimated as high as 60 m. p. h. occurred in connection with cold front; caused high seas. 3 small boats sunk near Venice. Freighter went aground. Sailing vessel rammed by steamer in Tampa Bay.
Lower Mohawk and middle Hudson River Valleys, N. Y.	31	All day.....	-----	-----	-----	Rain and ice.....	Heavy rain, which froze as it fell, covered power and communication lines with a heavy deposit of ice. Accumulations on telephone wires ranged up to 2 inches in diameter. Both wires and poles broken, leaving 33,000 homes without electricity, and service of 23,500 telephones interrupted. Damage will run into millions of dollars.
Coastal sections, Massachusetts and Rhode Island.	31	-----	-----	-----	-----	Gales and high tides.	Easterly winds of gale force, accompanied by unusually high tides, caused widespread damage along New England coast from Point Judith, R. I., to Cape Ann, Mass. 5 Navy boats sunk or damaged at Quonset Point, R. I.
Jefferson County, Ohio.....	31	-----	-----	-----	-----	Wind.....	Smoke stack blown down at power substation, breaking high tension feeders.

¹ Miles instead of yards.

LATE STORM REPORTS FOR MARCH AND NOVEMBER 1948

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Place	Date	Time	Width of path, yards	Loss of life	Value of property destroyed	Character of storm	Remarks
Oxford (near), Lafayette County, Miss.	March 30	11 p. m.....	-----	0	10,000	Tornado.....	Struck small community of Yocona. Several residences, barns, and other outbuildings damaged; 1 barn set afire by lightning. Stored corn damaged by rain. No serious injuries to persons or livestock.
Colorado, extreme eastern portion.	November 17-21	3:30 p. m. on 17th-3 p. m. on 21st.	-----	1	250,000	Blizzard.....	Temperature near 0° F., winds reached 70 m.p.h. Snow ranged from light to 8 inches; drifted to depths of 15 feet, resulting in halting of transportation for 24 to 72 hours. Some wind damage to buildings, equipment and winter grains, but heaviest losses to livestock killed and heavy shrinkage. One death by freezing at Springfield. Sedgwick, Logan, Phillips, Yuma, Kit Carson, Elbert, Lincoln, Cheyenne, Prowers, Baca, and Los Animas Counties affected.